consumption. However, in exceptional circumstances, when there is an acute shortage of supply in the domestic market causing distress to the weavers, especially of the handloom sector, limited imports are allowed under close supervision. In the past 3 years, only 46.26 metric tonnes of mulbery raw silk has been imported for domestic consumption.

Import of Raw Silk

198. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large quantites of raw silk are being imported for return export of finishing silk;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that large quantities of the imported silk has found their way into market;

(c) if so, whether the Central Silk Board has requested Government to stop the import of silk; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) to (d) Under the Advance Licensing Scheme (ALS) of the Export-Import Policy, exporters are allowed the facility to import their raw silk requirements for export production.

The Government had received a number of requests from various quarters including the Central Silk Board about the alleged misuse of the raw silk import facility available under the ALS and the need to ban/restrict the import of raw silk.

While, it has been felt that the raw silk which is genuninely required for export production may continue to be allowed for import under the ALS, the Government have taken the following steps to restrict the import of raw silk and to ensure that unscrupulous elements in the trade may not misuse the facility:—

(i) The Input-Output norms for import of raw silk under the ALS have been revised.

(ii) The facility of Value-Board Advance Licensing has been withdrawn in the case of silk textile products.

(iii) Pre-shipment inspection scheme has been reintroduced for silk products exported against ALS imports of raw silk.

Production and consumption of Cotton

199. SHRI G. PRATHAPA REDDY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what was the carry over surplus of cotton during the current year;

(b) what is the estimated production of cotton during the current year;

(c) what is the total domestic consumption of cotton in our country;

(d) how much will be the surplus during the current year; and

(e) what is the quota of export of cotton bales given for this year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) The carry over surplus of cotton during the current year is 30.74 lakh bales.

(b) The Cotton Advisory Board (CAB) in its meeting held on 8th November 1993 had estimated the production of cotton during the current year at 135 lakh bales. However, there have been reports of damage to the crop in some states and the production of cotton is now expected to be around at 125 lakh bales.

(c) The total domestic consumption of cotton in the country is estimated at around 125 lakh bales.

(d) The surplus during the current year is likely to be approx. 29 lakh balex.